

# IRS News Release

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## IRS Commissioner Praises Congress for Funding, Suspends Plan to Close Taxpayer Assistance Centers

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WASHINGTON — IRS Commissioner Mark W. Everson today lauded the Congress for its progress thus far in securing additional funding in accordance with the IRS 2006 budget request, and he suspended plans to close some of its Taxpayer Assistance Centers.

"I appreciate the actions the Congress has taken thus far in securing more resources for the IRS, and particularly that the Senate Appropriations Committee has fully funded the President's request," Everson said.

The Senate committee has provided the full \$10.68 billion the President requested, and the House has passed a bill at \$10.56 billion. The Internal Revenue Service's 2005 funding is \$10.24 billion.

In May, the IRS announced its intent to close 68 of its 400 Taxpayer Assistance Centers later this year. But both the House bill as passed and the Senate Appropriations markup have included provisions in the Fiscal Year 2006 IRS budget that would stop the IRS from moving ahead with the closures, pending further study.

In recent years, the IRS has made significant improvements in service to taxpayers, including phone services and internet technology. "The President's budget gave us additional funding for enforcement, which helps reduce the deficit, but requires us to do some modest belt-tightening in other areas, as other federal agencies have been asked to do. We want to create efficiencies where they'd have the least impact on service. Nonetheless, I appreciate the concerns raised by Congress about our walk-in centers, and have put these closures on hold," Everson said.

Although the provisions pertaining to the Taxpayer Assistance Centers have yet to become law, Everson decided to immediately suspend the proposed closures until any related actions required by the Fiscal Year 2006 IRS appropriation have been completed.